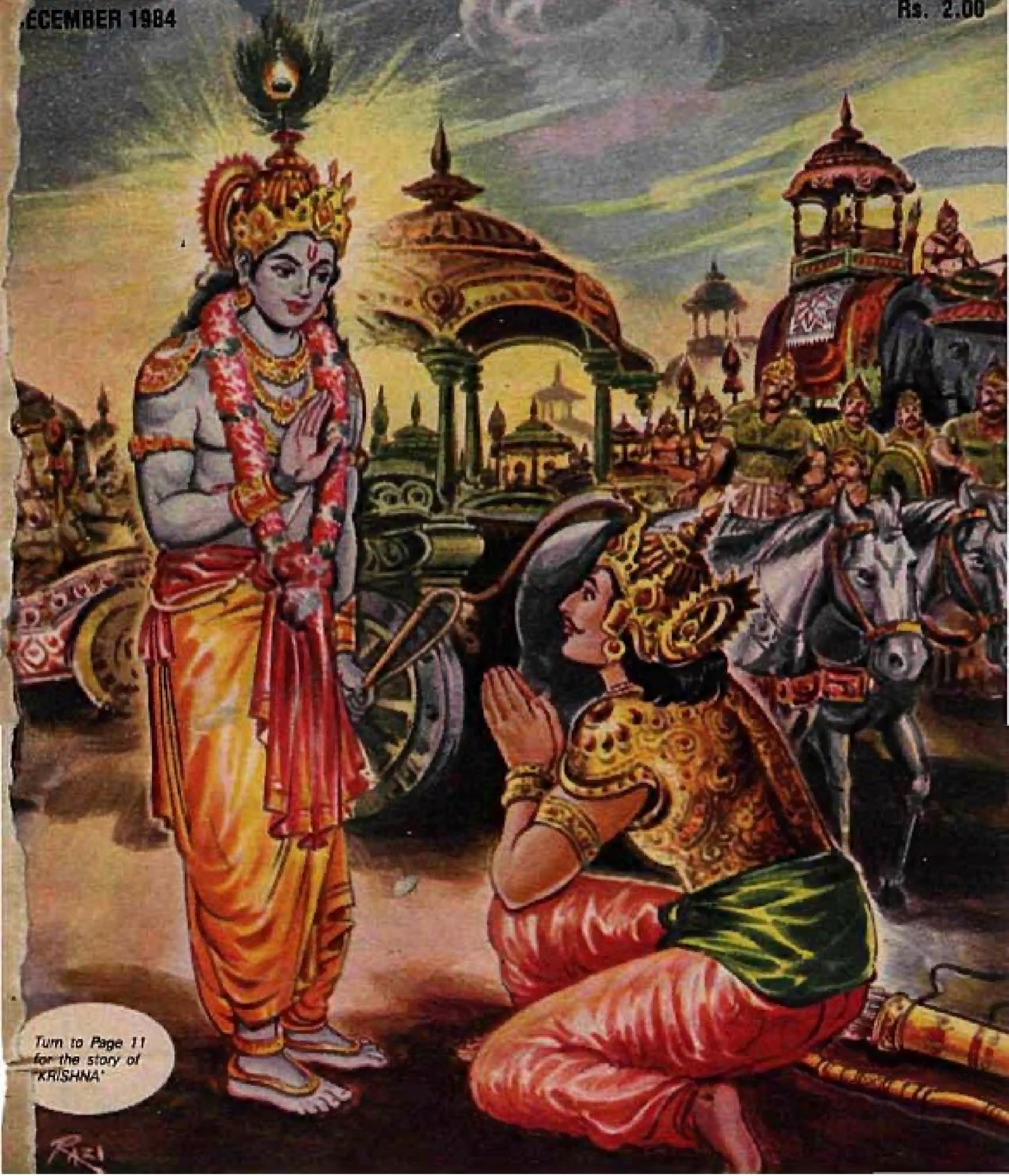


CHANDAMAMA

DECEMBER 1984

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Smt. INDIRA GANDHI



"Meanwhile, you sit in Anand Bhawan, and Mummie sits in Malacca Goal, and I here in Naini Prison—and we miss each other sometimes, rather badly, do we not? But think of the day when we shall all three meet again! I shall look forward to it, and the thought of it will lighten and cheer up my heart."

Thus wrote a father to his daughter whose mother also was in jail! The father was Jawaharlal Nehru, and the daughter Indira, born on 19 November

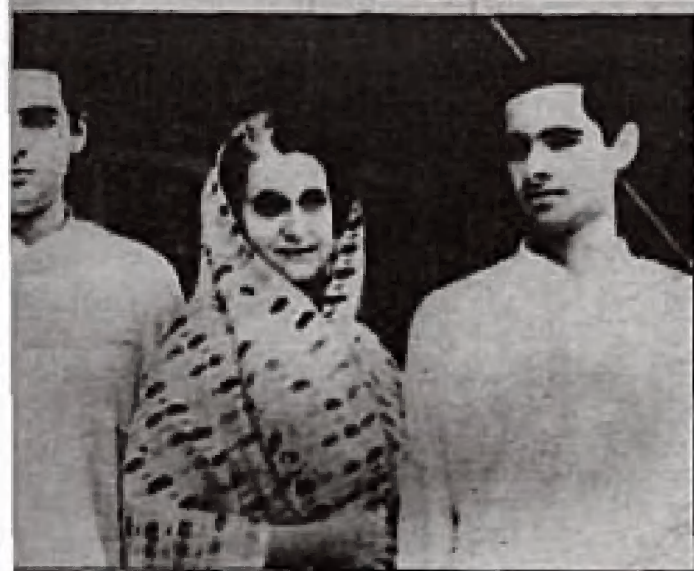
1917, who later grew famous as Smt. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India and one of the greatest leaders of the 20th century world.

Although born as the granddaughter of a famous man, Motilal Nehru, and as the daughter of the most promising leader of the time, Indira cannot be said to have been born with a silver spoon. They were difficult days. Her father's sole concern was the freedom of India and her tender mother stood by him. Naturally no luxury awaited Indira, the couple's only child, but suffering and tension.

She lost her mother, Kamala Nehru, in 1936. Thereafter she became a mother to her illustrious father and never abandoned that role until his death in 1964. This despite the responsibility of her own little family made up of her husband Feroze Gandhi and two sons, Rajiv and Sanjay. Indeed, she stood like a rock behind Jawaharlal, bestowing on him care and counsel, that helped him to contribute so much to India, Asia and the world.

As a companion of her father, she gathered experience and insight, while courage and love for the motherland were always her virtues. The calm with which she suffered tragedies—the death of her husband and the death of her younger son, was



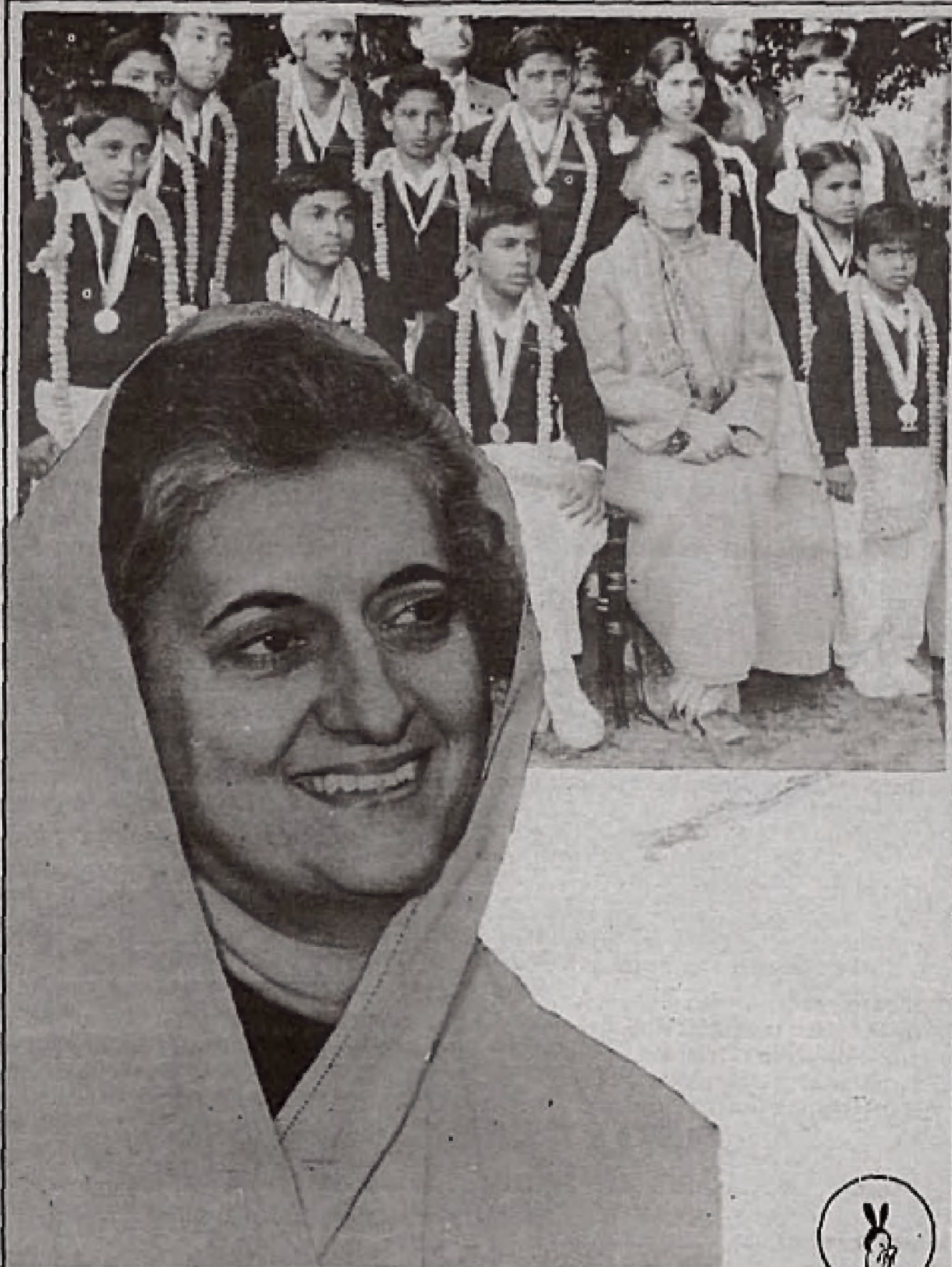


exemplary. The same kind of calm one could observe in her when she faced the other kind of crises—political or national.

Indira Gandhi became a martyr on 31 October. She loved all and the children in particular. Naturally she valued Chandamama. She wrote, "Our children need books and journals which will awaken their minds to the marvels of creation and the living universe of ideas. Publications for children must arouse imagination, create aesthetic awareness, encourage the desire for knowledge and at the same time teach them to live in harmony with their own society and the world. My good wishes for the continued success of "CHANDAMAMA".

Again when she learnt the Chandamama was going to appear in Sanskrit, she wrote, "Sanskrit is the eternal spring of our culture and the mother of most of our regional languages. More young people should be acquainted with its riches. My good wishes to the Sanskrit edition of "CHANDAMAMA".

Her love and wisdom will always remain with us as inspiration. We will always remember her with pride and gratefulness.



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- * *Birth of the River Saraswati—in the Rivers of India*
- * *Legends of India, a tale from Arabian Nights, Laugh with Nasruddin, Towards a Better English*
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"Bharat is the greatest land on earth and it alone is the land of action while the rest are lands of pleasure. It is only after great acquisition of merit that a person gets the privilege of being born a human being in this country"
—*Vishnu Purana*

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CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

Founder: CHAKRAPANI

NEWS OF A NEW MAGAZINE

A year is coming to an end. Chandamama is happy to have served its young readers with joy and alertness. It has never slackened its efforts in making each issue a rewarding reading.

But the Chandamama Publications have done something more during the year. The institution has prepared to launch a new magazine, named THE HERITAGE, for the grown-ups. You can look forward to a continuity in your healthy reading habit when you too grow up.

A recent national survey shows that Chandamama, though meant for the young, is avidly read by adults. In fact, Chandamama's adult readership is greater than that of any other national magazine. Similarly we may hope that THE HERITAGE, though meant for adults, will be read by the young too, to their benefit.



शनेः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।

आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

śanaiḥ śanairuparamed buddhayā dhṛtigrhītayā

Ātmasaṁsthaṁ manaḥ kṛtvā na kiñcidapi cintayet

One should gradually grow tranquil and concentrate on one's soul, to the exclusion of every other thought.

— The Gita

NEWS-FLASH



The Talking Statues

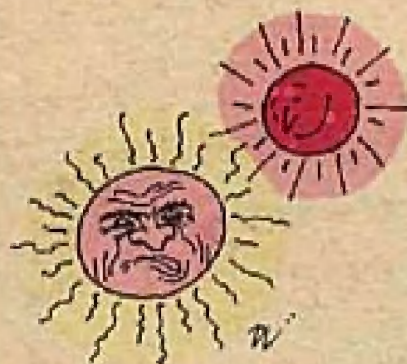
Before long we shall have in Bombay a novel museum of life-size talking statues. They will be of a hundred great Indians.

Some of the statues have already been built. The most impressive among them is that of Jawaharlal Nehru. When the switch is on, it can deliver the speech Nehru made at the United Nations on 10 November, 1961. The movements of the statue are regulated with electronic and computer devices.

"Mountain of Devils" Conquered

A mountain not of a handful, but of a thousand devils! That is what the mountain in the coldest region of Karakoram in the Himalayas is called. It is a concealed peak and it had been dreaded for years, for, people who tried to pass by it perished!

It is conquered at last! An Indo-Japanese expedition led by Col. Balwant Sandhu, Principal, Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, Uttarkashi, did it!



The New Sun

Scientists have detected a new Solar System in the process of formation around a new Sun. It is 50 Light-Years away from the Earth. (A light year is the distance light travels in a year's time.) The new Sun's distance from the Earth is 400 times more than the distance between the Earth and our familiar good old Sun.

STORY OF

Krishna

—By Manoj Das

(In the imminent war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, Krishna's personal support went to the Pandavas whereas he allowed his army to fight for the Kauravas. However, in a final attempt to avoid any clash, Krishna called on the Kauravas as the emissary of the Pandavas and pleaded for a peaceful settlement. but Duryodhana turned down his proposal.)

MESSAGE OF THE GITA

Not far from either Hastinapura or Indraprastha was the vast meadow on which Parasurama had performed some sacred rites. Also, King Kuru, the sire of both the branches of princes, the Kauravas and the Pandavas, had performed a great Yajna there. The place, famous after his name as Kuruk-

shetra, was also called by the sages as the Dharmakshetra or the ground sanctified. It was believed that the soul of one who died there, while engaged in a battle or engrossed in penance, ascended to heaven. No wonder that Kurukshetra should be chosen as the venue of the war.





Both the camps plunged into preparations for the crucial confrontation. At Krishna's suggestion, Yudhishthira chose Dhristadyumna, the prince of Panchala, as the chief commander of his army.

It was the great Bhishma who was entrusted with the task of commanding the Kaurava army. But this sage-prince declared that he will never kill any of the Pandava brothers, though he was ready to cause havoc among their supporters and soldiers.

Scores of kings with their armies had arrived at Kurukshetra to join either of the camps. Chariots of different

kinds flying colourful flags, horses and elephants and a sea of soldiers and the dust raised by them blinded the horizons. The leaders of both the camps had agreed that nobody should harm an enemy who had lost his weapons or who had decided to refrain from fighting. With the sunset the battle should be taken as over for the day. Thereafter the enemies can be friends until the beginning of the battle the next day.

The two camps were arrayed facing each other. Stirring trumpets and bugles shook the earth. But Yudhishthira descended from his chariot, after laying down his arms and putting off his armour. He was seen heading towards the Kaurava side.

His brothers felt surprised and disturbed. They too got off their chariots and caught up with him. "What talk do you propose to have with the enemy at this hour?" they asked anxiously.

Yudhishthira did not reply, but Krishna told them with a smile, "Don't you worry, Yudhishthira is not going to surrender, but to ensure our victory."

Yudhishthira first approached Bhishma and bowed down to

him and sought his blessings. "You are wise, O my son, go and fight. Victory will be with the just," said Bhishma.

One after another Yudhishthira met Drona, his teacher, Kripacharya and Shalya, his revered seniors, who were now the generals of the Kauravas. He sought and got their blessings and then returned to his own chariot.

It was not only an example in humility, but also a triumph of a different kind. Had Yudhishthira not shown this courtesly to his elders, they would have cast curses on him. That would have caused him misfortune. Now they were full of goodwill for

him, though they were poised to fight against him.

Krishna sat before Arjuna holding the reins of the horses of his chariot. Arjuna desired him to drive the chariot along the passage that divided the two camps so that he could see those with whom he had to fight. Suddenly he asked Krishna to stop the chariot. Remorsefully he said, "O Krishna, why should I fight these venerable elders and my kinsmen? The reward that might result from the bloodshed will never satisfy me!"

Krishna told Arjuna that such moods of depression and elation were the signs of ordinary



minds. Arjuna was expected to behave better. Arjuna must fight because it was his duty to uphold justice and truth, rising above sentimentality. But that alone should not be the inspiration for his taking up arms. Krishna explained to him that what lay at the root of his depression was his ego. He must conquer that. He need not fight for his personal satisfaction or gain. There is a Divine plan at work. He can offer his services to the working out of that plan. If he can do that, it would not matter to him what work he did. Any work that fell to his lot will be of equal importance.

Ordinary people work for the

satisfaction of their desires. If the fruits of their labour are in keeping with their desires, they are pleased. If not, they are disappointed. But one who works for the Divine remains permanently calm. Failure or success does not affect him, for he leaves the results of his actions to the Divine.

Non-violence is a lofty ideal, but as long as the forces of violence and evil remain active, they have to be met with force. But one who has become an instrument of the Divine does not have violence or hatred in his mind. He acts as his soul directs him. He can make use of his valour and strength without



violence in his heart.

Krishna also revealed to Arjuna that death was not the end of life. Like a man shedding his old clothes for the new, the soul abandons one body and enters another. The soul is immortal. He who knows his soul, knows that he is immortal.

Krishna gave Arjuna a glimpse of the universal self, the *Visvarupa*. Awe-struck, Arjuna saw Krishna as the power that contained, sustained and destroyed everything. He was as luminous as a billion suns. Planets came into being, revolved and disappeared within him. He was infinite and eternal.

Arjuna realised that the highest wisdom lay in rising above one's limited ideas and totally surrendering oneself to the Supreme Lord. When one succeeded in doing this, one was liberated from one's bondage to *Karma*; one did not suffer for one's sins, for one did not commit any sin any longer, whatever be the appearance of one's action.

What Krishna told Arjuna is famous as the *Gita*. Arjuna emerged from the dialogue enlightened and inspired.

Conch-shells and bugles were sounded from both the camps. The Mahabharata War began.

—To Continue.





LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

The Haughty Hermit

In a certain temple there was an old priest. He was learned and wise. But only a few people knew of his great qualities.

He adopted a boy and gave him lessons in scriptures. The boy learnt his lessons promptly. He could speak very fluently. Soon people began to admire him. His fame spread as a young hermit.

The king heard of the young man's achievement. One day he sent his minister to invite him to the court.

"If the king has any need of me, he is welcome here," said the young man gravely. The minister went away.

"My son, you did not do the right thing. You should have

accepted the king's invitation," said the old priest.

"Why? Is it wrong to refuse to go to the king? I have heard of sages to whom the kings came!" retorted the young man, a bit agitated.

"It is wrong, so far as you are concerned!" calmly replied the old priest.

The young man said nothing, but it was clear that he did not relish the old priest's observation.

After some time the old priest handed over the charge of the temple to the young man and left on a long pilgrimage.

Meanwhile a couple, coming from some faraway place, had settled down near the temple.

The couple had a beautiful daughter. The young priest set his heart upon her and married her. In due course a son was born to them.

What he earned as a priest used to be enough for his own living. Now that he had to maintain a family, he needed more money.

People appreciated his scholarship, but nobody was prepared to pay him on that account! Soon he found himself in a difficult situation. "Why don't you go to the king? He loves scholars and he will no doubt reward you," advised his wife.

The young man went to the king. The king welcomed him and gave him some money.

The young man reported at the court once every month and returned with some money.

That was sufficient for him to maintain his family until a second child was born. Then he began visiting the court once every fortnight. When a third child was born, he visited the court every week.

The old priest returned after five years. He saw the situation. The young priest was in a bad shape. There was no end to his worries.

"My son," said the old priest, one day the king wanted to receive you as a scholar. You refused to go. Now you go to him as a beggar. You referred to sages to whom the king's went. Those sages were not proud like you. Because you were proud, Providence has taught you humility through suffering!"

The young man nodded, his head hung.



LAUGH WITH NASRUDDIN

THE MULLA AND THE MIRACLE

Mulla Nasruddin had a guest who claimed that he could perform miracles. The mulla did not seem impressed.



The Mulla bought two fowls and had them fried in butter. He kept them in a covered vessel and went out.

In order to startle the Mulla, the guest removed the fried fowls and kept two live ones in the vessel. Back home, when the Mulla took off the lid, the fowls flew away.



"Thanks for your miracle. Now, friend, do another small miracle. Bring me the money I spent in buying the fowls and the butter, if you wish to impress me," said the Mulla.

Treasure Island

After Long John Silver and his pirates have launched an unsuccessful attack on the stockade where Jim and his friends, Squire Trelawney and Dr. Livesey, have taken refuge, Jim sets off to find out what has been happening on the *Hispaniola*.



"Mr. Hands," I said boldly. "I have come aboard to take possession of the ship. You will therefore please regard me as your captain until further notice." Struggling to his feet, Hands looked at me slyly. "I reckon," he said, eyeing my guns slyly, "I've tried my last fling and I've lost. So I'll help you sail the ship where you want."

There was an odd smile on his face as he took the helm. It was a smile that betrayed a shadow of treachery. I detected it as he craftily watched me standing there, trying to seem unconcerned.



"Now my hearty, luff," Hands cried suddenly. He put the helm hard up and the *Hispaniola* swung around rapidly and ran stem on for the shore. This manoeuvre interfered with the watch I had kept on the coxswain, with the result that I did not see him release his grip on the wheel and reach for a dirk.

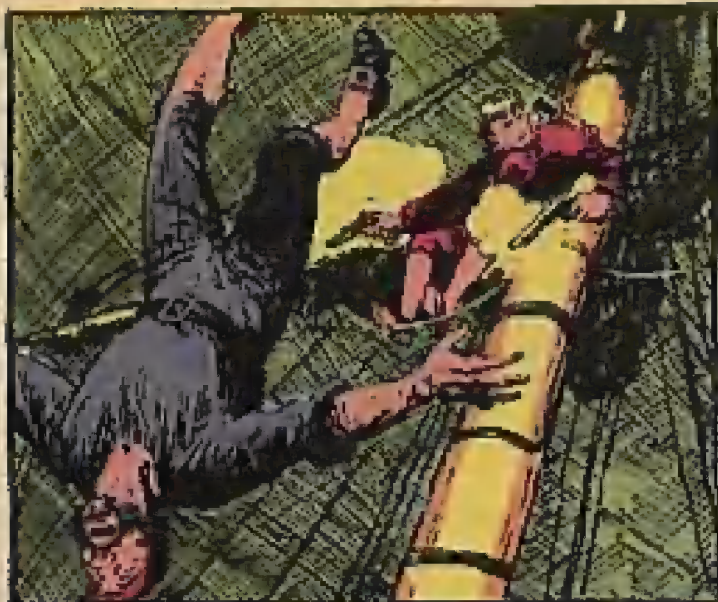


With a roar like that of a charging bull, Hands threw himself forward. At the same instant I leapt sideways. It was at this moment that the *Hispaniola* struck, and almost immediately afterwards canted over.

I had to find some way of escape, and quick as thought I sprang into the mizzen shrouds, and did not draw breath until I was seated on the cross trees. Hands, meanwhile, was hauling himself into the shrouds.



"One more step, Mr Hands," I called out, "And I'll blow your brains out." He stopped instantly. "Jim," said he, removing the dirk from his mouth. "It seems I'll have to strike my colours, which comes hard for a master mariner...."



I was smiling away as conceited as a cock on the wall, when suddenly something sang like an arrow through the air. I felt a blow and then a sharp pang, and there I was, pinned by the shoulder to the mast. At the same time both my pistols went off, and with a choked cry, the coxswain fell.

The knife, I found, had merely pinned my shirt to the mast, and I was able to free myself easily enough. Clamoring overboard, I found the water shallow. Now in famous spirits, I set my face towards the stockade, but having lost my bearings completely, I did not reach the stockade until it was dark. Stepping inside, I was immediately greeted by a shrill voice. "Pieces of eight," it screeched. "Pieces of eight!"



Silver's parrot, Captain Flint! I turned to run, struck violently against one person, recoiled and ran full into the arms of a second, who, for his part, held me tight. "Bring me a torch," said Silver. By the light of it, he leered down at me. "Here's Jim Hawkins," Silver said. "Dropped in like, I take that as real friendly."



I was dragged then into the block-house, where to my horror I could see nothing of my friends. I could only judge they had all perished. "Now, Jim," Silver said. "I've always liked you, so I'm going to give you a chance to join us. No one's pressing you, mind...."



"If I am to choose," I said, "I have the right to know where my friends are." "I don't know where they are," said Silver. "Now make your choice. Are you with us, or against us?" "Enough of this," cried one of the mutineers, drawing a knife, "I say we do away with him, and be done with it."



There was a low murmur of approval from the other mutineers. Then one of them stepped forward. "Seems the rest of the crew agree," he said. "We therefore ask the right of council." Silver shrugged and led me outside into the cool night air. "You're within half-a-plank of death," he whispered. "But I'll stand by you. But tî for tat, Jim. If Long John is ever in danger of swinging, you'll do all you can, won't you, Jim, lad?"

—To Continue



The Poet and His Admirer

He was a great poet. He was the court poet of Ambergir. The young quoted from his poems on love and the elder people quoted his verses for their wisdom. Everyone in the kingdom admired his poetry. "Poetry is his natural speech," people used to say. He was Mahakavi Sridhar.

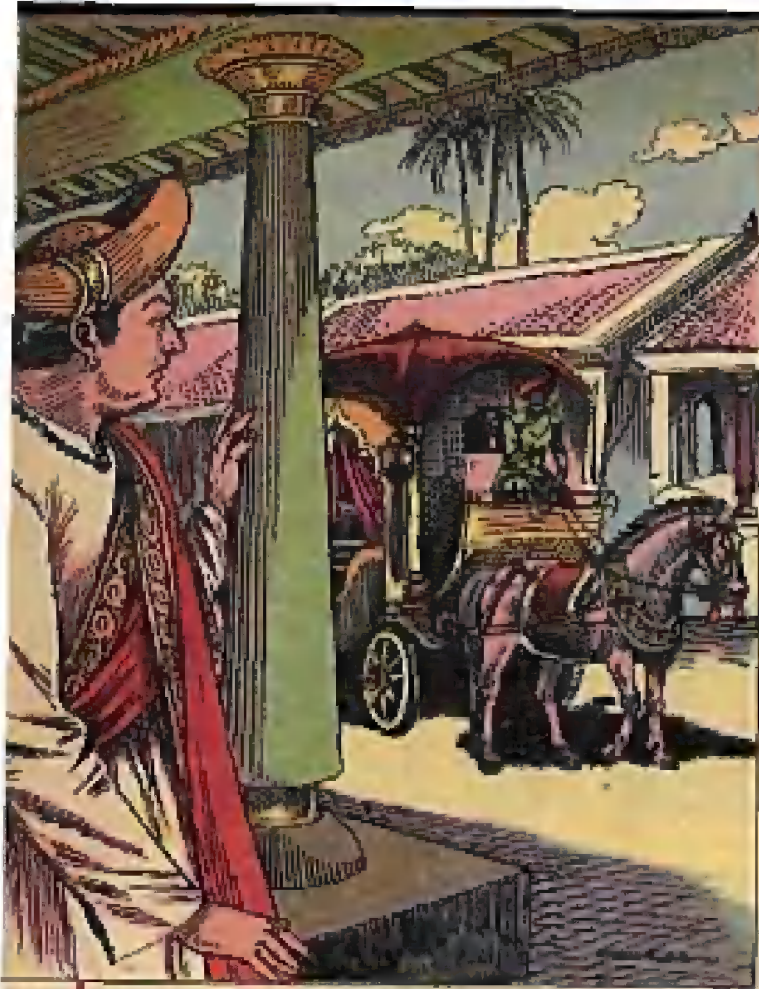
But this great poet seemed to be a shy person who preferred to stay away from the people. He even avoided attending the court functions.

"He is arrogant," said one. "He is proud and haughty," said another. "He does not deserve to be a court poet because of his uncouth nature," said a poet who was aspiring to get the title

of 'Court-Poet' for himself.

A young man of the kingdom named Nikhil, was an ardent and sincere admirer of Sridhar's poetry. He could not stand the criticism that was thrown at his favourite poet. He felt that it was not possible for such a great and wonderful poet to have such a mean nature. He decided to meet the poet.

After a day's long journey, when Nikhil came to Sridhar's house, he was told that the poet had gone out on some work and that he would be returning only late at night. On the second day, he was told that the poet was too engrossed in writing to be able to see him. On the third day also, when Nikhil was about



to be turned out on some lame excuse, the poet came out and asked, "Young man, what is it that you want from me? Can't you leave me in peace?"

Nikhil was taken aback by this rude tone of Sridhar. "Sir, I am an ardent admirer of your poetry. I have waited for three days so that I could meet and request you to....."

"I have no time to spare for such people as you. There are plenty of such admirers—they are making my life miserable. Let me alone," snapped Sridhar haughtily and closed his doors.

Nikhil returned home, pained to get such a treatment from

Sridhar. He was sad to realise that the criticism against Sridhar had some truth in it.

Two years passed. One day the poet was required to go to his village because of a message that his brother had suddenly taken ill. Sridhar hired a horse-carriage and started for his village.

On the way the horse suddenly stumbled and fell down. The coachman discovered to his great surprise that the horse had injured its knee very badly and that it was impossible for it to walk any further.

"Sir," said the driver, "I'm afraid the horse has got to be replaced. Its knee is very seriously injured. There is a way-side inn a little further away. I request you to rest there until I return with another horse."

Sridhar began to walk. He covered a mile and still the inn was not in view. He walked another mile before he could sight the inn. When he reached it, he was all exhausted and his clothes had become dirty with dust.

"Please give me a room for tonight," Sridhar requested the inn-keeper.

"There are no rooms. You

can sleep on the verandah if you want," replied the inn-keeper in an indifferent tone.

"Do you know to whom you are talking? I am the court-poet, Mahakavi Sridhar."

"Ha! Ha! You are Mahakavi Sridhar, are you? Indeed, you have the cheek to say so! Get away, or I shall have you arrested," said the inn-keeper in a threatening tone.

"Why?" Have you not heard of the great poet Sridhar? Have you never seen me?" questioned Sridhar.

"Surely I have seen Mahakavi Sridhar. For the last two days he is lodged in my own inn! If you want to see him, go to the backyard and peep in without disturbing him," advised the inn-keeper.

Sridhar became very curious and he went to the backyard and had a look at the young man who was dressed exactly like himself and reciting his poetry to an audience of admirers. He recognised the young man. He was no other than the person who had met him two years ago.

As soon as the assembly broke, Sridhar marched to Nikhil.

"How dare you impersonate



me? I shall have you arrested for this grave crime," he shouted angrily.

Nikhil bowed to the poet humbly and replied in a calm tone, "Mahakavi Sridhar, I have no ill-intention in impersonating you. I decided to do so only after meeting you. It was intolerable for me that such a great poet as you should have such an unrefined nature. And I did not want people to carry such an impression of you. So, I am taking the trouble of meeting the lovers of your poetry. By talking to them with kindness and love, I am creating a new image of yours. This image goes



well with your wonderful poetry. Pardon me, Sir, for what I have done, but I have done it for my great love of your poetry."

Mahakavi Sridhar realised that Nikhil was not only his admirer but a true well-wisher.

He also understood the importance of being polite.

"Nikhil, I'm indeed pleased with your love for me. However, you need not impersonate me any longer. I shall take care of my image myself," said Sridhar in a loving tone.

WONDER WITH COLOURS



The Kangaroo Dance

Every year, when spring rolls in and the first full moon rolls out into the sky, they, the Bohra tribe of Australia's ancient inhabitants dance like kangaroos. They do so in memory of a starry night of a far off time called the 'Dreamtime' when the world was pretty different from what it is now.

The tribals say that during Dreamtime, the Bohra—that is how the kangaroo was then called—walked about just as the dog does, on all its fours. And

he had long canine teeth too. So, he looked much more ferocious than the present kangaroo. Here is the story of how the Bohra changed into the docile kangaroo that we see nowadays.

One starry night during Dreamtime, the Bohra, or the Kangaroo, was sitting near a bush and nibbling tender leaves. He was enjoying a good supper. Suddenly, the stillness around him was broken by loud voices of singing. The Bohra stopped chewing his leaves and listened.



Yes, it was clear singing with beats of drums. He stopped eating, he had enough anyway, and walked towards the sound.

As he neared it, he saw something amazing. He had never seen anything like that ever before. There were some creatures standing on hind legs and jumping in a circle around a blazing fire while some other creatures were singing and beating on noisy drums! The dancing creatures, instead of having long hair on their bodies, had colourful designs all over them. The Bohra stood staring in awe.

The dancers were from one of the tribes of Australia. As the story goes, they were perform-

ing a sacred ceremony. As the song sung by the women took on a faster tempo and the men folk speeded up their dance movements, the Bohra too became excited and felt like dancing.

All on a sudden the Bohra stood on his hind legs and hopped into the circle of men. Balancing with his thick tail and with the forelegs lifted up like the dancing men, he too began hopping behind the dancers, thump, thump, clip—clop, clip—clop!

It was the women that saw the Bohra first and stopped singing. The men who were so lost in their own dancing stopped too



and looked about them to see what was happening. They looked at the women and the women were staring at the Bohra. Some of the men got angry.

"Chase him away!" they shouted.

But the others decided not to do that.

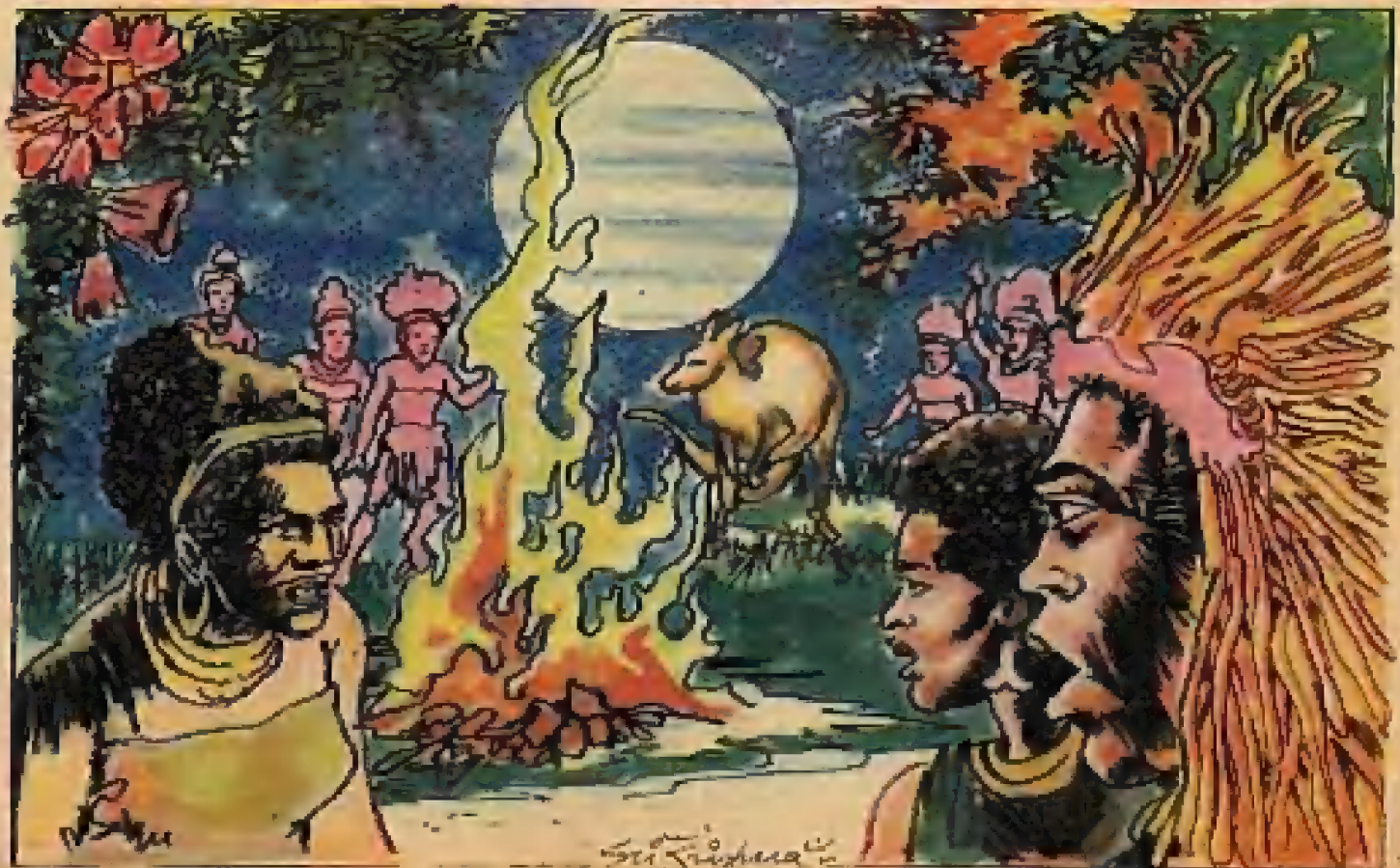
"Let us see how he dances!"

They asked the women to continue the singing and drumming and they themselves began to dance again. As the Bohra imitated the men, it amused everybody and they began to giggle and laugh. It was funny to see the Bohra's tail making designs on the ground too.

Amidst all that laughter nobody knew when it was exactly that the men had started imitating the Bohra's dance movements. Some of the men even went into the thickets and made for themselves long thick tails of grass. So, they followed the Bohra round and round. It made a funny sight indeed!

Soon, it was nearly dawn and the magic man of the tribe arose and made an announcement:

"This Bohra has attended our ceremonial dance without having been invited to it. This should never have been allowed. It is against our tribe's law. However, as he has already witnessed our dance, he has to



be made a member of our tribe. We shall initiate him into the membership of our tribe through the usual ceremony."

As a part of the ceremony, the Bohra was given a clean bath. Colourful paints were applied on his body, and then, with the help of the boomerang, his sharp canine teeth were knocked down.

Then, the magic man of the tribe, known as the wirinun, threw a charm over the Bohra.

"Now that the Bohra is initiated into man's community, all his tribe too shall walk on their hind legs using their tails to balance themselves, and they should hold their forelegs like

hands as a mark of gratitude to us."

The magic man said after a pause, "To show our gratitude to the Bohra because he has taught his dance to us, we shall henceforth call our tribe, the Bohra Tribe and celebrate this day of every year with the Bohra dance."

Since then, every April, the tribe celebrates the first full moon night with the Bohra dance. It is said that even today, on such nights, many kangaroos gather there to watch the Bohra dance, their ancestral dance, and feel proud. Surely they have reason to feel so!

—Retold by Lalitha Manuel.



GOD AND THE ATHEIST

There was once a rich man in a big city. He had so much money that he could purchase anything he wanted. So, he said to himself, "What is the need of God? I find no necessity of God in my life!" After a few years he declared to himself that there was no God at all. He turned an atheist or a non-believer in God.

One day, he was asked to speak at a public function. While boasting about his wealth, he said, "There is no God. If he is really there, I challenge him to strike me dead within five minutes."

Nothing happened for five minutes. The rich man said mockingly, "Have I not proved right? Are you not convinced?"

Then, a middle-aged man stood up.

"Sir, do you have any children?" he asked.

"Yes, I have a son. Why?" asked the rich man.

"If he gave you a gun in your hand and asked you to shoot him dead, would you have done it?"

"Of course I couldn't—I love him too much to do that!" answered the atheist, a little puzzled.

"Then, you know now why God didn't strike you dead!"

Slowly the rich man's eyes were moistened. That night, back at home, he knelt down in supplication.



The Officer Who Thought Himself Clever



A police officer was returning home late at night. He was not in his uniform, because he had been to a friend's house for playing chess. He did not know that it was past midnight.

He was inside a lane when he saw a gang of bandits coming from the opposite direction. He was alone and unarmed. He feared what the bandits will do to him if they saw him. It will be even worse if they recognised him.

The officer began to act like a drunken man. He babbled on meaningless phrases and pretended to tumble down while walking. He did not look at the

bandits straight, but he knew that the gang was observing him.

Slowly he passed by the gang, holding on to the walls and was soon outside the lane. He heaved a sigh of relief. He reached his home safe.

Next day he bragged about his trick before his friends in the police-station. His colleagues congratulated him on his successful escape from the clutch of the bandits.

Weeks later, some bandits were caught by a police party. They were brought to the police-station and beaten up.

The officer also took part in beating the bandits. While doing so, he bragged, "You chaps think yourselves to be very clever, do you? Ha ha!! The other night I came face to face with a gang like yours. I was alone and without even a stick in my hands. How do you think did I escape? By sheer

cleverness. I feigned drunkenness and acted as if I had taken no notice of the gang. I acted so well that they did not touch me!"

"Who can surpass you in cleverness, Sir!" said the sepoys.

At that one of the bandits could not control his laugh. That infuriated the officer, so much so that he gave him a terrible blow, shouting, "Laughing at me, eh? What cheek!"

The bandit fainted. He was dragged, along with the other bandits, to prison. Only one of them was detained in the police-station. He was the only one who had confessed to his crimes. The police wanted to get more confessions from him.

The officer found the bandit weeping. "What's the matter with you?" asked the officer.

"You assaulted your saviour!"

"What do you mean?" demanded the surprised officer.

"It was was our gang that you faced that night. We never believed that you were really drunk. Most of us would have liked to kill you so that you will not be able to tell anybody that you had seen us. Someone



also said that if you were really drunk, it would be easy for us to snatch from you whatever you had and then kill you. But the man whom you beat up pleaded with us to let you pass. Afterwards I asked him why he did so. He said that he just took pity on you! So, sir, it is not your acting but my friend's pity that saved you!"

The officer stood speechless. It was too late to undo what he had done. Besides, as bandits, all of them had to be punished. But he realised how vain it was for him to boast of his cleverness and how bad it was to act hastily!

Nature's Kingdom

The Tell-Tale Trails

Well-beaten trails high in the Rocky Mountains of North America have a tale to tell to the experienced eye. For these are the trails of an animal which is the king of the mountains.

The dizzy heights at the top of almost perpendicular cliff faces are the domain, for much of the time, of the agile Rocky Mountain goat.

Found in the mountains, above the timber line, this goat ranges from Montana below the Canadian border to Alaska in the north. Its numbers are fewer now than they were in the days of its prime, when vast flocks roamed through the Rockies, but the trails are there to give evidence of the countless hooves that pounded along them.

The Rocky Mountain goat is about the size of a large sheep. It has very short and stout legs ending in broad and blunted hoofs, pointed ears and jet black horns.

Its body is covered in winter with a long coat of white hair which is nearly straight and falls on the sides of the body and limbs, but it is erect along the middle of the back. As it becomes longer over the withers and haunches, the animal looks as though it had two humps. Beneath the hair is a thick coat of wool.

Quest For Food

Indians used to make blankets of this animal's long silky hair, but they no longer do so. And

since it has no commercial value, this goat is left undisturbed, except by hunters, who are in any case deterred by the difficulty of reaching its lofty domain.

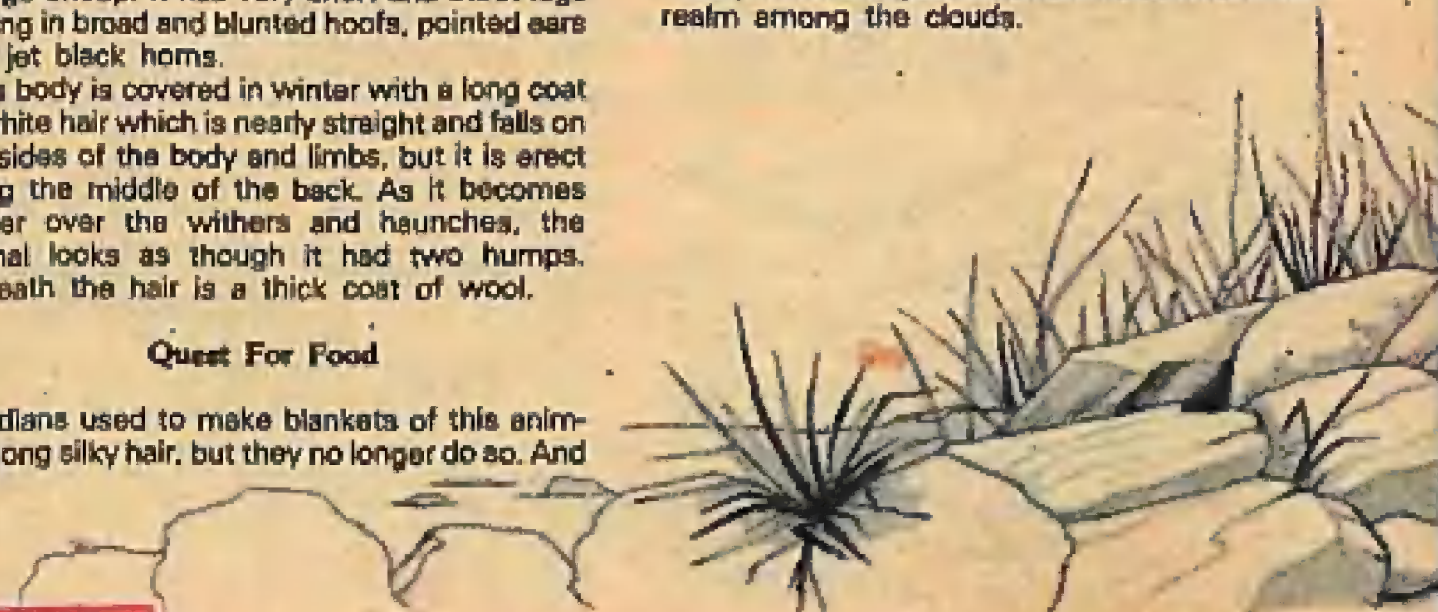
The need for food sends the Rocky Mountain goat to its high places. Lichen, moss and other stunted vegetable growths are its main food. In these elevated areas, this goat is able to outmanoeuvre its enemies with the greatest of ease, because its hardrimmed, split hooves, with their soft concave centres like suction cups, give it a firm grip on the rocky surfaces.

Although it is primarily a mountain animal, this goat has been seen close to sea level and even swimming in salt-water estuaries or rivers.

It is usually exhaustion of the food supply in its normal haunts which drives the Rocky Mountain goats to these lower levels. They have sometimes been seen crossing the lowlands which separate one mountain or range from another.

As might be guessed from their short limbs, these goats do not move very swiftly, trusting to concealment behind sheltering rocks, rather than swiftness of pace, for their safety. Although they are extremely agile in the mountains, they seem slow to use their agility to avoid danger and many have fallen prey to a hunter's gun.

To claim one as a victim, a hunter needs the skill of a mountaineer as well as that of a marksman. As such a combination is rare, the Rocky Mountain goat continues to survive in his realm among the clouds.





*New Tales of King
Vikram and the Vampire*

A King's Whims

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At intervals of the roars of thunder could be heard the moaning of jackals and the eerie laughter of ghosts.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, the pains you are taking at this unearthly hour speak of your patience and courage. But kings in general are quite whimsical. They take a decision only to change it afterwards. Let me give you an example. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you some relief."

The vampire went on: In days of yore the kingdom of Giridurg was ruled by King Bhimsingh. He had appointed a chieftain in every village. At the end of a



year he called a meeting of the chieftains. The chieftains gave him the report of their activities and spoke to him of problems if they had any. The king gave them grants for welfare schemes which they had drawn for the next year.

In the frontier of the kingdom there were two villages side by side named Rampur and Mangalpur. Bharat Das was the chieftain of Rampur. The chieftain of Mangalpur was Ravi Chowdury.

Because Rampur was situated at a low level, waters collected in patches all over the village during the monsoon. The whole village became swampy. Bharat Das was much worried over this situation. He was bent upon finding some way to keep his village safe from the hazards of monsoon.

Once he had a guest who was a sage. Bharat Das knew that the sage was capable of solving many sorts of problems.

At the request of Bharat Das, the sage carefully surveyed the village and said, "Bharat, the problem your village faces can be solved without much difficulty. You must dig a canal around your village. The earth thus dug



out can be used to raise the level of such spots where waters accumulate. During the monsoon the rain water will flow into the canal. In a corner of the village the canal can be made wide enough to look like a lake. That will keep your village cool in the summer. It will also be useful in many other ways."

Bharat Das jumped at the idea. He sat down with the sage to make an estimate of the project. He saw that he will need an amount of one lakh and fifty thousand rupees to complete the work.

"Try to get the amount from the king. My information is, this



is for the last time that the king will give grants without any condition. From the next year a new rule will be introduced. The chieftains will receive the money they demand, but they have to pay it back in some years," said the sage.

"Thanks. I'll get the money from the king at the annual meeting," said Bharat Das.

When Ravi Chowdhury heard of the sage's advice to his neighbouring chieftain, he invited him to visit Mangalpur. "Sir, we don't have any particular problem. But we will be happy to consider any advice you give for the welfare of our village," he

told the sage.

The sage surveyed the village and examined the soil with great care. "Chowdhury," he said, "Your soil is most suitable for cultivation of coconut plants. Apart from having a good yield of coconut fruit, you can make use of the coir to make different kinds of things. You should build a small work-shop in your village for making coir products."

They made an estimate of the money necessary for the coconut plantation and the work-shop. It came to one lakh rupees. The sage informed Ravi Chowdhury that if he did not succeed in getting the money that year, what he can get in the future is not aid, but loan.

After a month the chieftains were summoned for the annual meeting. Bharat Das and Ravi Chowdhury reached the capital a day early.

The minister in charge of the programme was meeting some of the chieftains, privately one by one. He called Bharat Das and asked him about his project. Bharat Das told him all about it. "I need one lakh and fifty thousand rupees for it," he said.

"Listen to me, Das. The king will grant only half of what you will put up as your need. Give a second thought to the amount you will like him to grant you," said the minister.

"Must I say that I need three lakhs?" asked Bharat Das, a bit puzzled.

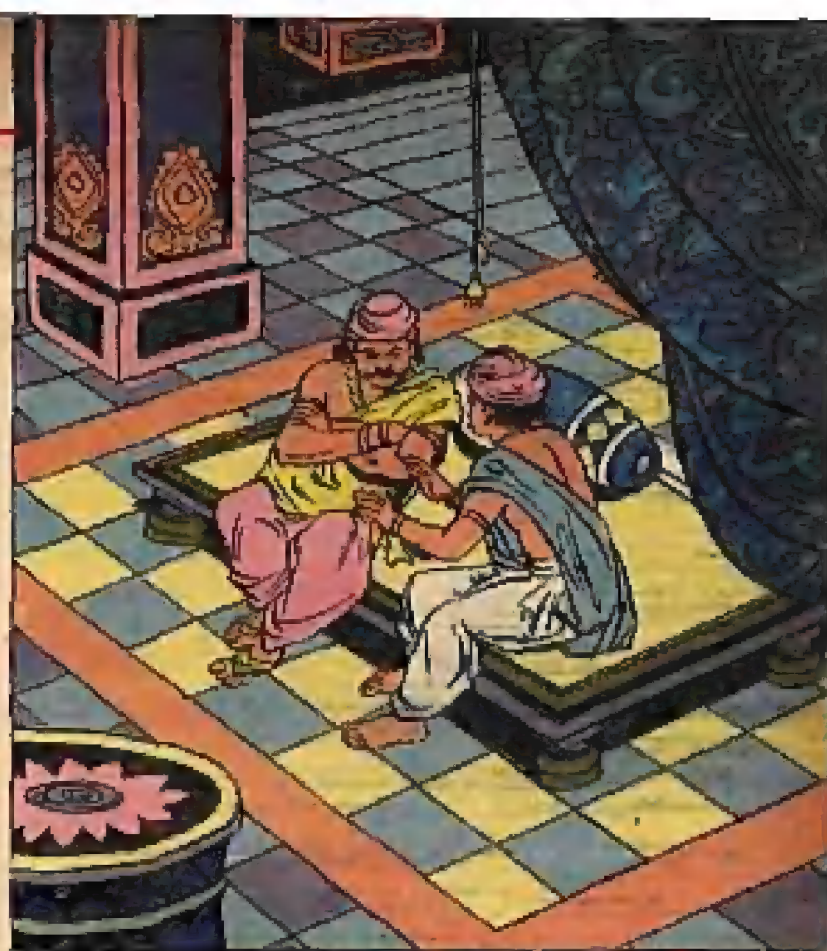
"Oh, Das, who does not know that the double of one and half lakhs is three lakhs? Well, you may ask for four lakhs if you so please!" Bharat Das still looked puzzled. "If I ask for four lakhs and the king grants two lakhs, I will get fifty thousands more than I need. What am I going to do with that surplus?" he asked.

The minister smiled and patted Bharat Das on the back. "Well, Das, can't you and I spend that much? My daughter's marriage is not far off. You may also be having some need..."

"Thanks for your counsel. Will you like to say anything more?"

"No. I hope, you'll meet me before your departure!" said the smiling minister.

"Of course we are meeting tomorrow at the court!" said Bharat Das. As he was going



out, he saw Ravi Chowdhury heading towards the minister's lodge.

Next day the king asked the chieftains one after another about their needs. When it was Ravi Chowdhury's turn, he said that he needed three lakh rupees, after explaining his scheme for the coconut plantation to the king.

Bharat Das was surprised. He knew that the estimate for Ravi Chowdhury's scheme was only one lakh!

Then came Bharat Das turn. He gave a picture of his scheme and asked for fifty thousand rupees.

The king looked at him intently. "Are you not making any mistake? Are you sure that only fifty thousand would do?" he asked.

"My lord, our real estimate is an amount of one lakh and fifty thousand rupees. But the villagers will offer their labour; nobody will demand any wage for his work. That will save us fifty thousand. Then the well-to-do villagers should contribute to the tune of fifty thousand to the scheme. Hence an amount of fifty thousand from the treasury should suffice!" explained Bharat Das.

The king kept gazing at Bhar-

at Das for a while. "Wait," he said.

Then he asked the chieftains, barring a few, who had already received grants, to return the purses to him. "Those whom I've ordered to return the purses are no longer chieftains. Soon new chieftains will be appointed for their villagers," he announced.

All sat stunned.

The king then gave an amount of two lakh rupees to Bharat Das and said, "Spend the money for the people's welfare in the manner you please. You need not submit any account to me!"

The vampire paused for a



moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King! I have a couple of doubts in the matter. Why did King Bhimsingh take back the purses from some while he let some others keep them? Secondly, why did he grant two lakh rupees to Bharat Das while the latter was in need of fifty thousand only? Does it not prove that the king was acting whimsically? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck!"

King Vikram replied forthwith: Bhimsingh was not at all whimsical. He was as much wise as Bharat Das was conscientious. The sage who surveyed the villages was probably a confident of the king. He might have informed the king about the exact needs of both Rampur and Mangalpur. The minister, who advised the chieftains to demand more from the king and gave hints that the surplus amount can be divided between himself and the chieftains, was surely acting in consultation with the king. The king found out who among the chieftains were corrupt. He asked them to



return the purses. Bharat Das was found to be a real patriot. Das must have understood that there is dearth of money in the treasury and that is why the king was going to stop giving aid. He decided to receive only the minimum from the treasury. The king realised that money was not only safe in Bharat Das's hands, but also it would be spent most properly. That is why he gave him enough money and also the freedom to spend it the way he liked."

No sooner had the king concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

Power of The Pyramid

The pyramid is a mystery.

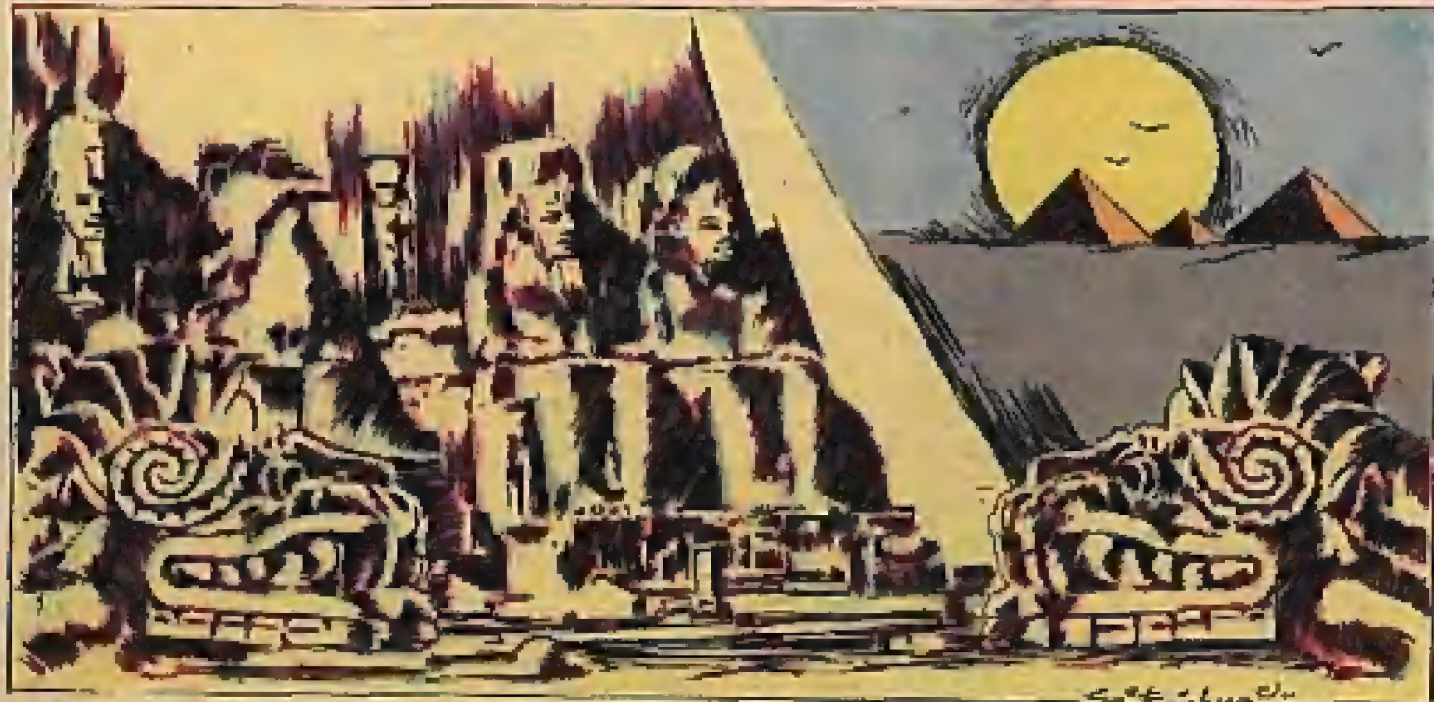
Why did the great Egyptian kings, the Pharaohs, choose to build the gigantic geometric mountains? Why did they construct in those fortresslike monuments artfully hidden entrances with blind doors and dead-end passages? How did the people on the construction site put together huge stone blocks each weighing up to fifteen tons? Many theories have been advanced but none is final.

Apart from the mystery of their construction, it is said that a strange power is at work inside

the pyramids. None have been able to find out what exactly it is.

Dr. Louis Alvarez, a Nobel Prize winner in physics, tried to probe into the mysterious power inside the pyramids with the help of computers manufactured by one of the world's leading companies—the IBM. But, strangely, the computers did not work inside the pyramids even though they were tested and found to be in perfect order.

Later, a Frenchman named Bovis, while visiting the King's



Chamber of the Great Pyramid, got curious because the litter thrown around by tourists didn't seem to give off any dirty smell even after several days. When he searched the litter heap, he saw in the heap two dead kittens which did not give out any stink either. He took the dead kittens home and dissected them. He found out that they were completely dehydrated and mummified. Could this be one of the explanations of the mummies that have survived for hundreds of years?—he wondered.

In recent years, a Czechoslovakian radio engineer named Karel Drbal, built a miniature of the Great Pyramid and put a razor blade in it exactly at one-third of the way to the top of his

little pyramid, about where the King's Chamber is in the Great Pyramid. He discovered a puzzling phenomenon: his blade did not rust, nor did it look dull. Each morning he took it out, had a close shave with it and put it back inside the pyramid. He found that it stayed sharp for more than a hundred shaves!

What is the explanation to all this? No one knows yet.

However, alert businessmen used this discovery of Drbal and made pyramid-shaped milk cartons which definitely kept the milk fresh for longer time than the usual.

You too could perhaps try out Drbal's idea and make wonderful discoveries!





The Real Ruler

It was for more than three months that King Govardhan lay ill. He had not only become very weak and bed-ridden, but, he had also lost his voice.

So, his young son, Prince Seshnath, was given the responsibility of ruling the kingdom.

It was almost six months before King Govardhan showed the first signs of recovery. Within another two months he gradually regained his health and started coming to the court to observe the administration of his young son.

He heard loud praises of his son from everyone. People in the court expressed great admiration for Prince Seshnath's sense of justice and his capacity for administration.

"Maharaj, like father like son," said an old courtier and King Govardhan felt very proud

of his son. He felt assured that his kingdom would be well looked after by his able and clever heir.

In the midst of these happy times one day the prime-minister Badrinath suddenly took ill and within a couple of days he died.

"Dear son," said King Govardhan a few weeks later, "it is necessary that we choose a new prime-minister for our kingdom."

"Yes, revered Father," replied the son, "but, please let me have my own choice of the prime-minister."

Accordingly, a few eligible young and old men from the nobility were called for the selection to the post of the prime-minister.

"How much is five into two?" asked Prince Seshnath as the

first candidate approached him.

"It is ten, Sir," replied the candidate.

Every candidate was asked the same question and each one of them gave the same reply—except for Amitnag, the son of the late Badrinath.

"Five multiplied by two is seven, Sir," replied Amitnag.

"Indeed you deserve to become my prime-minister," said Prince Seshnath with great satisfaction.

"I do not know how five into two can make seven. It is actually ten, but just because all others said ten, I decided to say seven," explained Amitnag in all honesty.

"What do you mean? Do you also know five into two to be ten? Then, you are not suitable for the job. You can go," shouted Prince Seshnath in an angry tone.

King Govardhan, who was watching all this procedure, became curious at this point and questioned Prince Seshnath, "How is it that you are selecting a prime-minister by asking such a silly question? And why did you select and then reject young Amitnag?"

"Father, our late prime-minister used to say," replied Prince Seshnath, "that one does not necessarily become a good prime-minister just by knowing





good arithmetic. He himself must have been very poor in arithmetic and that is why he was such an able prime-minister. So, I wanted to select someone who is absolutely a zero in arithmetic. And, as for Amitnag, he knows the right answer to my question, which shows that he knows some good arithmetic. That is a disqualification."

King Govardhan was struck dumb by his son's stupidity. All his high impression of his son melted into thin air. He then

realised that it was not his son, but his late prime-minister Badrinath who had actually managed his kingdom in his absence. All the praises he had heard were only to flatter him.

Before it was too late, King Govardhan interviewed many young candidates and found out that Amitnag was truly an able person. He appointed him as his prime-minister.

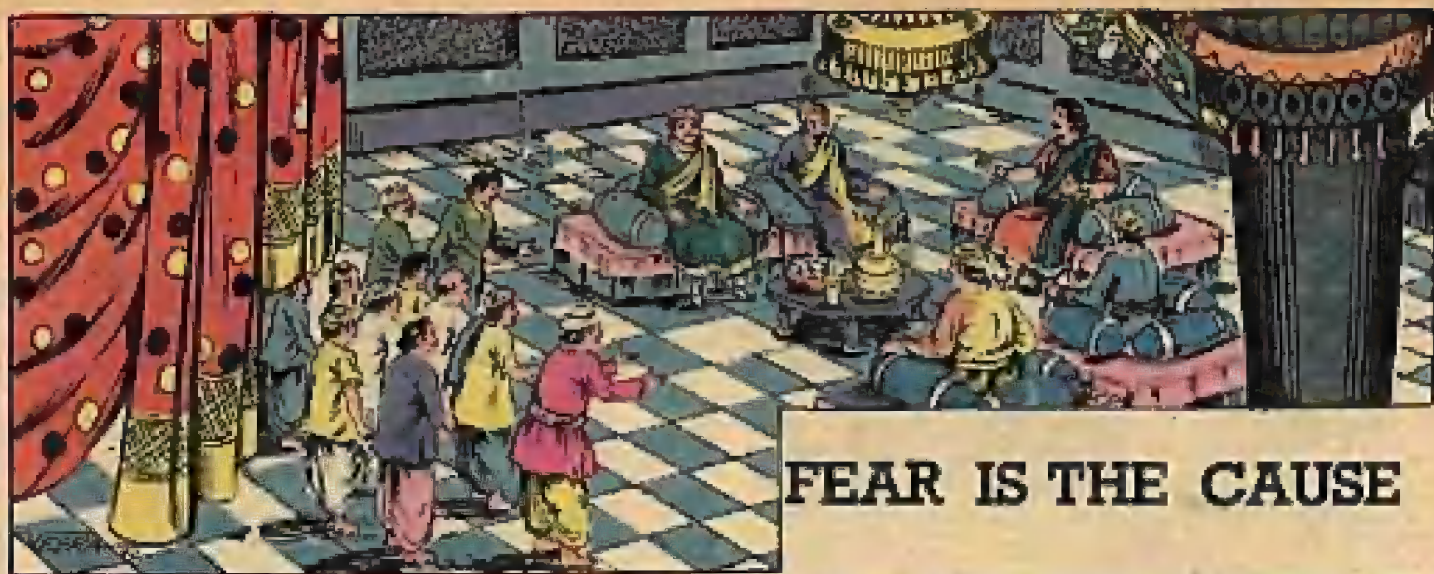
After a few years when King Govardhan passed away he was a disappointed father, but, he was a contented king.

Vijay : Mother, when do you think am I going to have a long beard?

Mother: Why?

Vijay : So that I could use that necktie father bought for my birthday without embarrassment.





FEAR IS THE CAUSE

Purandar was an able minister working under the king of Marwar. He looked after the administration of Udayagiri, important for its commerce. He had ably managed to bring peace and happiness to the town. The king was happy with him.

One day, as he was holding a counsel with his advisors, a group of citizens walked into the hall, with fear writ large on their faces.

"Prabhu, we have come to you directly to tell you of our daily woes," said one of the merchants in the group. "There is absolute lawlessness and fear in the town. Thieves and bandits roam in the streets of the city during night as well as day. There is no one to stop them. People's life and property are in constant danger. Fear has grip-

ped the city. We earnestly request you to look into our security."

Purandar was shocked. He could not believe what was being said. He said angrily, "I don't believe you at all! You know very well what I have done to achieve the present peace in the city. Before my coming to this city, it was infested with bandits and goondas. Properties were being stolen and people molested. I curbed all this within one year.

In such a big and commercial city there could be of course one or two miscreants or thieves here and there. But that does not mean that you make a mountain out of a molehill!"

"It is true, Prabhu, that after your taking over, law and order came to our city. But, since a few months, looters and bri-



gands have again come out into the open; they are now in absolute abandon. We are not exaggerating, Prabhu!" submitted another merchant.

"You are all a pack of liars! You are only trying to tarnish my good name!" shouted a furious Purandar.

Seeing his wrath, the people returned, feeling helpless, sad and disappointed.

Nagendra, who was his chief adviser, listened quietly to all this and said, "Purandarji, it was quite unbecoming of you to become so angry. There could be some truth in what the people were complaining. I feel that

they were pretty genuine and that we should look into their complaints."

"Whatever the truth, they were exaggerating it too much. After the long and constant work for the past one year, may be there is a slight slackness in the guardians of law. And some thieves might be taking advantage of this temporary state. Nothing more than that," said Purandar, quietening down a bit.

Nagendra kept mum.

It so happened that a week after this incident, Purandar was invited to a dinner by a rich and promising businessman. It was a very elaborate dinner. As Purandar and his colleagues had eaten sumptuously, they preferred to walk back home.

The moon had not yet risen. The night was dark.

Just as they turned round a corner in the street. Purandar and Nagendra were attacked by two robbers. A scuffle took place. Within minutes the fight was over with the robbers taking to their heels. Suddenly, Purandar felt that his necklace was missing. He got alarmed.

"Nagendra, quick, go to your

right and chase the thieves. They have stolen my necklace. I will go to the left." They started running in different directions.

At another corner, Purandar almost dashed into a person. When he managed to break speed and looked at the person in front of him, he saw that the person was wearing a gold necklace studded with diamonds.

"You thief! Give back my necklace!" Purandar ordered in a violent manner.

The man got so frightened that he immediately took off the necklace, and placing it in Purandar's hands, ran for his life!

Later when Nagendra met Purandar at home, and heard what had happened to him he said, "Sir, you are supposed to be looking after the law and order of this city. If you yourself begin to steal things from people, then how can you ever show your face to the people?"

"I have not stolen anything," retorted Purandar. "What is wrong in getting back my own diamond necklace from the robber?" asked the minister.

"But, Sir, you had no diamond necklace on you last evening. A fortnight back you had yourself given it to the goldsmith for some repairs. I



saw it with my own eyes. If you want, I shall call the gold smith in the morning and prove it to you," said Nagendra.

Next morning, the goldsmith came along with the diamond necklace belonging to Purandar. Purandar was shocked on seeing it. He felt guilty and repentant.

"Sir, the person who gave away his necklace must have been a gentleman of our town. Knowing about the lawless situation of our city, he obviously thought you to be a robber. So, he promptly handed over his necklace without giving any resistance," explained Nagendra.

Purandar, realising his grave mistake, asked nervously "Then tell me, Nagendra, how shall we find out the man and return him this necklace?"

"That is no problem. I shall arrange to find him out."

answered Nagendra. "But, you see, Purandarji—with one incidence of robbery you were so panicked that you thought any man and everyman on the street to be a thief. You were even convinced that you had lost your diamond necklace when you had no necklace at all on your neck! Now imagine how many cases of burglary and how much of lawlessness those innocent people of the town must have faced before coming to you for your intervention?" explained Nagendra.

The short experience of the night had broken his pride. Purandar redoubled his efforts to quell the spreading lawlessness and to calm the fears of the people. Soon, he realized on a firmer base what he had set out to achieve—peace and happiness for Udayagiri.



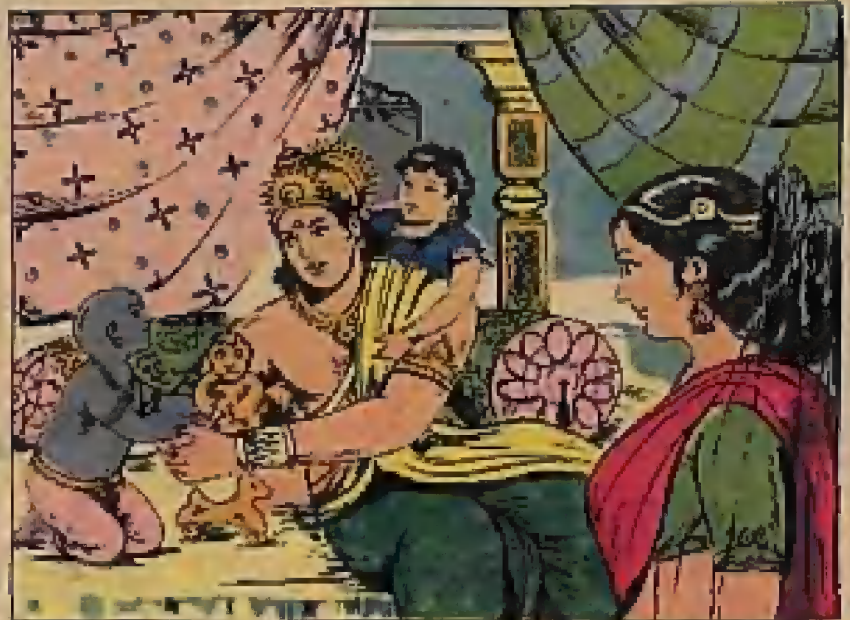


RIVERS OF INDIA

The Zigzag Yamuna

Most of the sacred rivers of India originate in the high Himalayas—the 'godly soul' and 'the king among the hills' as the great poet Kalidasa describes it. The Indian mythology does not view the rivers only as natural phenomena. It sees in them living spirits.

For instance, the river Yamuna was the daughter of the Sun-God and His consort, Sangya. Yama, the God of Death being their son, Yamuna is Yama's sister. Yamuna chose to participate in the earthly creation and thus became a river.



At Yamunotri in the Himalayas, below Mount Kalinda, the river Yamuna becomes visible. It is an enchanting place—and holy too—situated 10,800 feet above the sea-level. Nearby there is a temple with Yamuna as the deity.



At the beginning the Yamuna was marked by terrible eddies and whirlpools. No creature would dare to go near it. Its falls roared like a thousand lions and its moisture rose like high columns of smoke—resulting in an awe-inspiring sight.

One day, Balarama, the elder brother of Krishna, while wandering in the hills, felt like having a dip in that forceful flow. He stood on a rock and called the river to come near him.



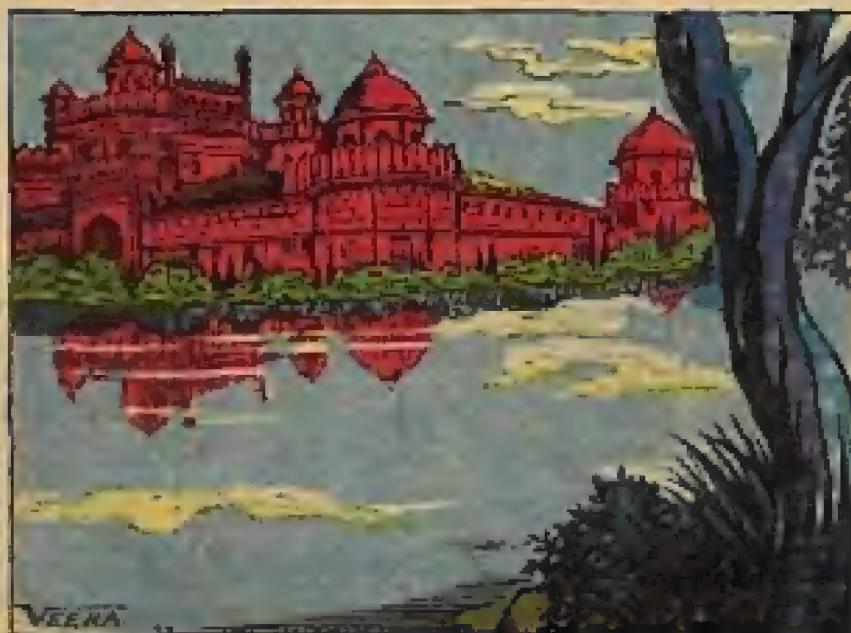
The river did not pay heed to Balarama's command. Balarama repeated his command, but to no avail. So, he jumped into the whirling water, but the flow tried to sweep him away. Balarama was terribly angry.

Balarama climbed to the bank. Then, with his mighty plough, he started drawing the flow zigzag through valleys, dāles and rocks, in a most whimsical manner. He did not seem to feel tired. He went on carving an intricate passage for the Yamuna.



At last the spirit of Yamuna assumed a form and prayed to the angry Balarama to leave her alone. Balarama was pleased. He refrained from drawing her any farther. The experience had made Yamuna less turbulent.

The Yamuna flowed by the legendary cities of Hastinapura and Indraprastha. The modern Delhi stands close to the sites of these two cities that have disappeared. Behind the historic Red Fort flows the Yamuna.





The Yamuna also flows by the ancient city of Mathura. It was here that Krishna had been born in the prison of the demon-king Kamsa and his father had carried him to Vraja across the Yamuna, with the serpent-king Vasuki protecting them from rain.

It was on the banks of the Yamuna, near Vrindaban, that Krishna used to play his flute, at once touching the souls of the devotees. Thus the Yamuna remains intimately linked with the childhood deeds of Krishna.



Near Allahabad the Yamuna meets the Ganga. The sacred meeting place is famous as Prayag. A third river of great antiquity, no longer visible though, also meets the Ganga there. She is the Saraswati. To have a dip at Prayag is considered highly auspicious.

...



The Goddess and The Ghost

The temple of goddess Varalaxmi was outside the village. It was the richest one amongst the temples of the area. The deity was decorated in gold and jewels and she looked beautiful and compassionate.

A little away from the compound of the temple, there was a big banyan tree which gave shelter not only to hundreds of birds but also to a friendly spirit.

Often, the goddess Varalaxmi used to come to the ghoul and spend some time discussing on various human problems. One day, the goddess said, with a sense of satisfaction, "The villagers here are really devoted and very sincere. They come to me with so many gifts and such devotion that...."

"It is all only a show, believe me, O Goddess. These human beings are merely selfish crea-

tures. Their devotion and love can be purchased with the lure of money," interrupted the spirit.

Varalaxmi refused to believe the spirit. "I shall prove to you one day that man is a noble and devoted creature," the Goddess challenged. And the spirit accepted the challenge, saying, "I too shall try to disprove you!"

After a couple of days, the Goddess selected one of her ardent devotees and appeared in his dream one night.

"Satyam, I'm Goddess Varalaxmi. I've come to grant you your prayer for a good job, as I'm pleased by your devotion to me. Go to the temple treasurer in the morning and ask him for a job. He shall honour my word," said the Goddess.

Satyam woke up early next morning with great joy. He



approached the treasurer and told him about the deity's command.

The treasurer, Ketan, was shocked to hear Satyam. That night he too had dreamt about Varalaxmi who had asked him to give a job to Satyam. But, unwilling to share his loot of the temple-offerings with anyone, he had conveniently brushed aside the dream, justifying to himself, "It is all my imagination. How can the goddess come to me and say such things?"

But now the truth of his dream was confirmed by what Satyam said. The treasurer feigned innocence and said, "I would have given you the job

had you come a day earlier. Just last night I promised to give it to poor Kanta Rao. I'm sorry." So saying, he left Satyam to his disappointment and went straight to the temple and prayed for Her forgiveness.

That very night, the spirit approached Satyam and told him, "Satyamji, I feel very sorry for you. The Goddess could not help you, but, I shall see that you become rich in no time. Tomorrow I'll possess the daughter of the village chieftain and I'll not leave her until you come and offer to treat her. People will think that you are a great exorcist and you'll become famous overnight."

Next day, every one in the village came to know that the village chieftain's daughter was violently possessed by a spirit and many an exorcist was being called for the treatment. Satyam decided to wait for two days before offering his services, because, he wanted to be sure if what the spirit had said was true.

Goddess Varalaxmi came to know that Satyam had accepted the help of the spirit. She went to him the next night and said, "Satyam, do not come under the evil influence of the spirit. I've

arranged for your job with Suresh Seth. He is my good devotee. He'll not fail me, I assure you."

Then, she went to Suresh Seth and commanded him to employ Satyam for which he would be amply rewarded.

Satyam, once again hopeful, approached Suresh Seth with the request for a job and then told him about his dream.

"A dream is only a dream. So why should I oblige this chap with a job even if Varalaxmi—presuming that it was truly Varalaxmi who had come in my dream last night—has told me to do so?" thought Seth.

"I've no job for you. You may look for it elsewhere."

The humiliation was unbearable and Satyam lost all his faith in the Goddess. He returned home resolving that never again will he go to the deity who seemed to be playing with his emotions.

That evening, Suresh Seth went to the temple with big garlands and lots of fruits and told the deity, "O Goddess mine, I feel extremely guilty for not having obeyed you. But, how could I help it? Just two days before I transferred all my property to my wife's name and I have nothing left for myself.





When I told her about your command, she said that I was putting forth false excuses in order to get back the property. So, pardon me, goddess Varalaxmi!"

The Goddess knew that Suresh Seth was lying and yet out of her immense compassion she pardoned him.

Meanwhile, Satyam went to the village chieftain's house and with the cooperation of the spirit relieved the possessed daughter. He felt happy at his success and was grateful to the spirit for his unfailing help.

Satyam came to be known as a great exorcist and the fame soon spread to the neighbouring

villages too.

It so happened that after some days the daughter of a rich landlord of a neighbouring village got possessed by a spirit. Satyam was expecting such a thing because the spirit had already informed him about this move of his.

The landlord sent word for Satyam to come. Satyam went to the landlord's house and he was given a warm welcome. When he entered the room of the landlord's daughter and began acting like an exorcist by chanting some incantations, the spirit revolted and suddenly started shouting at him as never before.

"I am enjoying my stay here, you fool! I love the good food and the luxury around. I've decided to possess this lady for good. Abandon all your tomfoolery and quit the place. I'm not going to cooperate with you any more!"

Satyam was struck dumb. He could never imagine that the spirit would be so rude to him and leave him in the lurch. Disappointed, he returned home. He could hear the villagers scoffing at him.

The patient Goddess again appeared in Satyam's dream at

night and said, "Did I not warn you not to get tempted by the evil spirit? He won you over by brief success and now he has thrown you out! That is how the evil spirits work. Well, I can still help you out of the situation if you are ready to do what I say." She then told him in detail what to do and then disappeared.

Next morning, Satyam took the big glass bottle given to him by the goddess, and went to the landlord's house. The spirit, as soon as he saw the bottle, got tempted and exclaimed, "What a beautiful bottle! And how very wonderful is the silken-swing inside the bottle! I wish I could..." As the bottle was a magic one, the spirit could see in it an illusion of a silken swing!

"I have come to present this to the landlord for his kind hospitality," said Satyam.

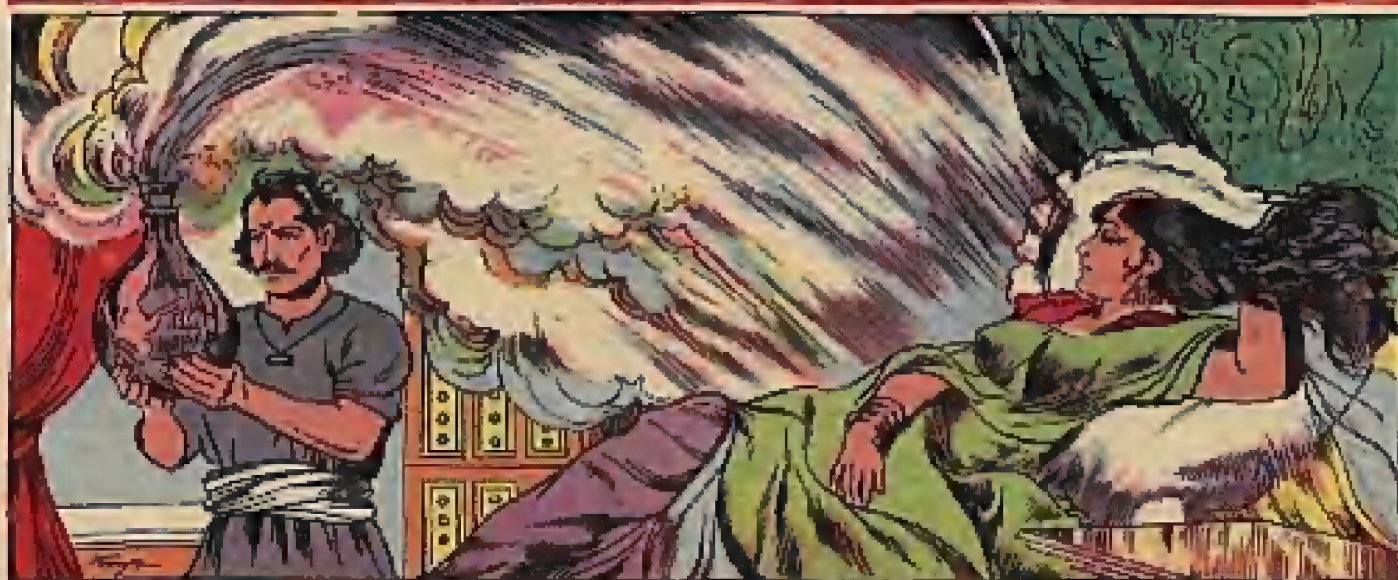
"What use is it for me or for any other human being? We do not know how to get inside the bottle and enjoy the swing! It is said that whoever will swing inside will be able to take any form he or she desires."

"I want to become a beautiful lady for the rest of my life—so I'll..." saying so, the spirit immediately entered the bottle in the form of smoke.

Instantly, Satyam sealed the bottle, and the spirit got entrapped for good.

Satyam left this dangerous game of acting as an exorcist after this and decided to devote himself to an honest living with the blessings of Goddess Varalaxmi.

The Goddess had also come to understand that man is basically good but he is very weak and is easily enslaved by money and power.



"Baiter! Make the Will!"

Reena and Rajesh entered the house bursting with laughter.

"What's the matter, children? Why such mirth?" asked Grandpa.

"Grandpa, a very funny thing happened in the canteen today, while we were having our tea," answered Rajesh, trying to control his giggle.

"Just beside our table sat two customers, gaudily dressed." Reena took up the narration. "Waiter, bring us a cup of sugar and an extra spoonful of tea"—said the man with moustache. The waiter looked puzzled. 'Just bring us a cup and a spoon and some tea and sugar—we want to make the tea ourselves,' explained the second man."

Reena could not narrate any further—she resumed her laughter.

"That was not the end. After they had their cup of tea with an extra spoonful of sugar, the first man ordered gravely, 'Baiter, make the will!' Ha! Ha!" said Rajesh.

Grandpa Chowdhury joined in their laugh. "But, do you know that this kind of transposition of words—like 'cup of sugar' instead of 'cup of tea'—or, shifting of just the initial sounds of words—like 'baiter' instead of 'waiter' and then 'will' instead of 'bill'—is called Spoonerism?" asked Grandpa.

"Has it anything to do with the spoon?" asked Rajesh.

"Of course not. Mr.W.A. Spooner of Oxford was a teacher loved by his students, but he bungled up words like that often. That is why such innocent slips are known by his name."

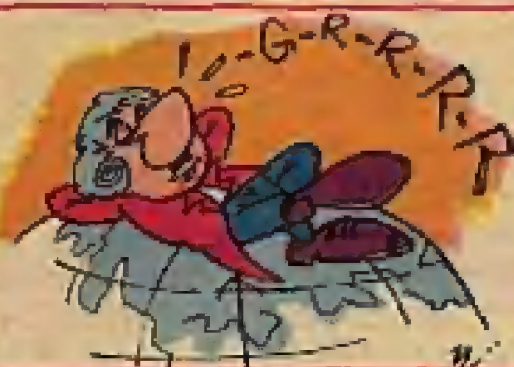
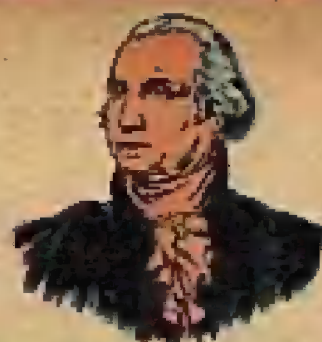
"Goodnight Grandpa, it is getting late for my homework," said Reena going to her room.

"True, it is going to be right Neena—oops!—night, Reena!" exclaimed Grandpa.



Do You Know?

George Washington, the first President of the U.S.A., died in the last hour of the last day of a week of the last month of the last year of the century!



King Louis XIV of France owned 413 exclusive beds. The besteads were exquisitely carved and ornamental. They remained "spread" all over the kingdom so that wherever he was, he could enjoy his own bed.

Triskaidekaphobia is a disease that haunts most of Europe. It is the fear of the number 13. Richard Wagner, the famous German composer, loved and respected the number 13. He was born in 1813. He had 13 letters in his name. He wrote 13 operas. His year of birth added up to 13 and he died on February 13 (1883).



The sun is the greatest slimmer. It loses weight at the rate of 1,000,000 tons a second!

An average man can lift a little more than his own weight, but an ant can lift 50 times its own weight.





LET US KNOW

What is 'ecological destruction'?

—Rama Das, Harit, Ravi Sundaram
and classmates, Bombay.

Ecology is the study of plants and animals and man's relation to them and the total environment. For reasonably healthy living, we need a certain kind of environment. Nature has provided us with such environment, or rather, man is made in tune with nature's environment.

Unfortunately the modern man has destroyed much of his natural and normal environment. Forests are destroyed at random. That affects the climate. The monsoon's law is disturbed when the forests are gone. Because of the destruction of the trees in the hills, the earth gets loose and falls into the rivers. The level of the river-bed is heightened. Consequently, during the flood, more villages and lands come under water.

This is only a small example of the ecological destruction. Unplanned establishment of factories which emit smoke and stuff that are injurious to health and which pollute the water and the air, is another sign of the same process.

It is extremely urgent that the people become conscious of the dangers of such activities.

How is the coral made?

—Joseph, Cochin.

The coral is formed out of hard skeletons of tiny sea creatures called polyps.

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



S.B. Prasad



M.C. Morabad

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs.50/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The Prize for Oct'84 goes to:—

Masters Vinodh Rajesh, S/o. T.G. Soundararajan,
B.I/C.20 Ravindra Nagar, Guntur-522 006.

The Winning Entry:—'Solicitation' & 'Salutation'

PICKS FROM THE WISE

He speaks to me as if I were a public meeting!

— *Queen Victoria.*

Heaven made virtue; man, its appearance.

— *Voltaire.*

He who devotes sixteen hours a day to hard study may become as wise at sixty as he thought himself at twenty.

— *Mary Wilson Little.*

A rose to comfort when thorns prick

*When bad things happen to good people it hurts.
When bad things happen to little children,
we need to help them. Give them sunshine
when rains pour. A provision for those hospital
bills or possibly a compensation to meet the
needs of a newer life and a fresh start.*

*The UI Student's Safety Policy has exactly
these provisions. It's available for children
and youth in schools, colleges and professional
institutions. Call in at the nearest UI office
during this Children's Day month. And get
to know more about this UI Policy. A rose
from UI to comfort, when thorns prick.*

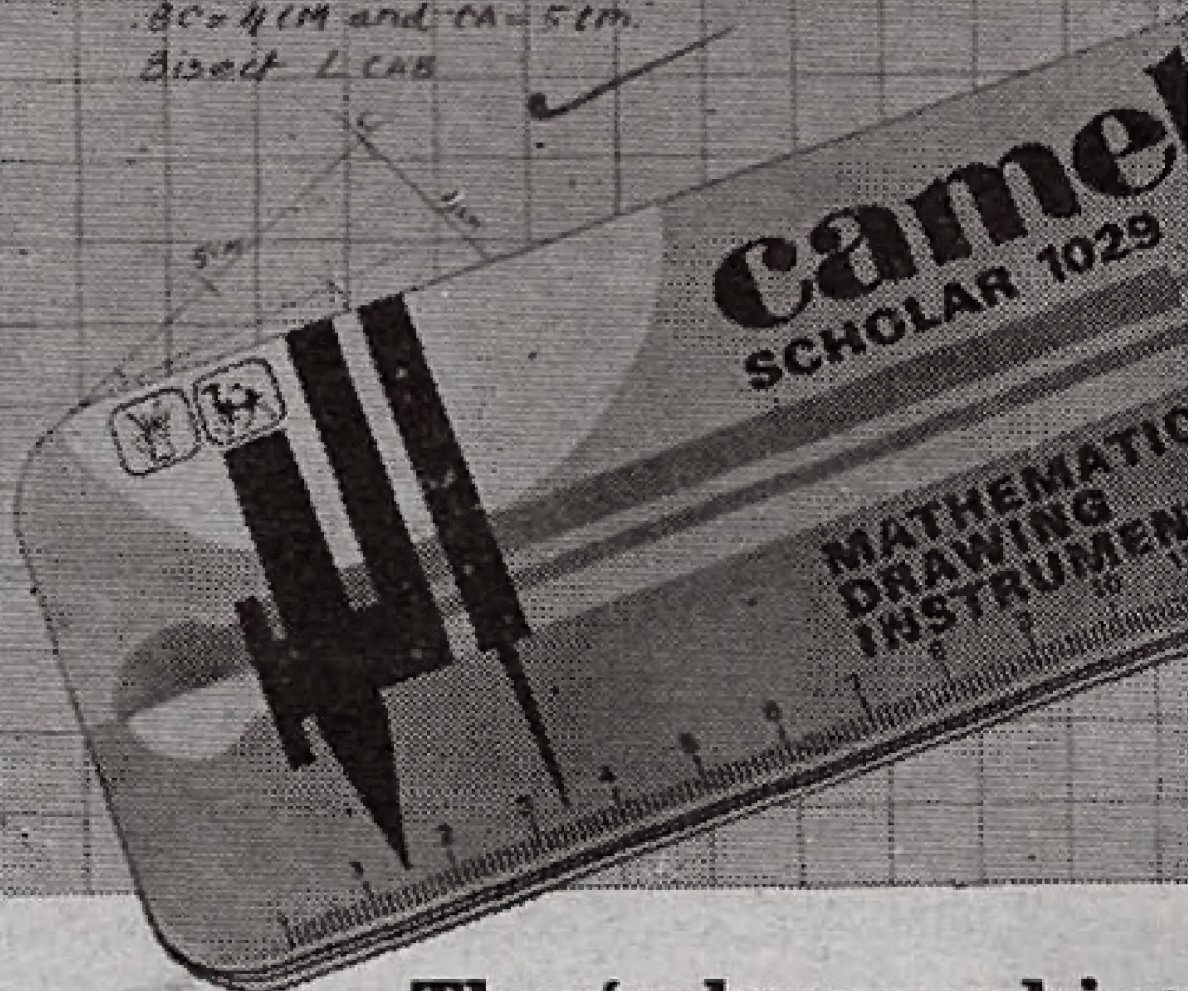


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VISION/ENG/811

1st Prize: Neeraj Sharma, Ponda Goa. 2nd Prize: C.S. Lakshmi, Hyderabad-500 029. P.V. Rao, Sambalpur Dist. M. Supraja, Cuddapah. 3rd Prize: Bhanudas Nimdi Mhaske, Ulhasnagar No.3. Johnson D' mello, Bombay-98. Satish Prasad, New Delhi-110 018. Aarti Gade, Kolhapur-416 003. Samir Bhutada, Poona-2. Nitin Nagesh Chittal, Bombay-99. Shoeb Ahmed, Calcutta-700 016. D. Mahendran, Coimbatore-38. S. Aruna, Madras-20. Iyer Sujata V. Bombay-78.



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